



# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
PRESS RELEASE

Press Release – 68-12  
Oct. 26, 2012

## **U.S. Fleet Forces Sets Sortie Condition Alpha, Ships Getting Underway**

*From U.S. Fleet Forces Public Affairs*

NORFOLK -- Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) ordered all U.S. Navy ships in the Hampton Roads, Va., area to set Sortie Condition Alpha today in preparation for an upcoming sortie as Hurricane Sandy travels up the East Coast.

Adm. Bill Gortney, USFF commander, has directed ships to sortie between this afternoon and early tomorrow morning.

USS Ashland (LSD 48) and USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) will sortie from Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia Beach, Va.

The following ships will sortie from Naval Station Norfolk: USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), USS Bataan (LHD 5), USS San Antonio (LPD 17), USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), USS Ashland (LSD 48), USS Carter Hall (LSD 50), USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), USS Monterey (CG 61), USS Anzio (CG 68), USS Barry (DDG 52), USS Gonzales (DDG 66), USS Mahan (DDG 72), USS Bulkeley (DDG 84), USS Mason (DDG 87), USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), USS Gravely (DDG 107), USS Ross (DDG 71), USS Nicholas (FFG 47), USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201), USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13), USNS William McClean (T-AKE 12).

USS Wasp (LHD 1), USS Taylor (FFG 50) and USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) are already underway in the USFF area of responsibility.

“Based on the current track of the storm, we made the decision to begin to sortie the fleet,” said Gortney. “The current timeline allows them enough time to transit safely out of the path of the storm.”

The Navy orders a sortie during potentially extreme weather conditions to reduce the risk of significant damage to ships and piers during high winds and seas.

Some ships will not get underway, due to various maintenance availabilities, and are taking extra precautions to avoid potential damage. Commanding officers have a number of options when staying in port, depending on the severity of the weather. Some of these options include adding additional mooring and storm lines, dropping the anchor, and disconnecting shore power cables.

As a precautionary measure, Commander Navy Installations Command ordered all installations in the Hampton Roads area to set Tropical Cyclone Condition Three as Hurricane Sandy is forecast to bring high winds and rain to the Mid-Atlantic coast. Tropical Cyclone Condition Three means destructive winds of greater than 50 knots associated with a tropical system, are expected within 48 hours.

A variety of information is available in support of family readiness during hurricane season including:

- Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System, <http://go.usa.gov/kQ4>, which provides a standardized method for the Navy to account, manage and monitor the recovery process for personnel and their families affected and/or scattered by a wide-spread catastrophic event.
- U.S. Fleet Forces planning preparedness Web site to help families with hurricane and destructive weather planning, [http://www.public.navy.mil/usff/Pages/disaster\\_preparedness.aspx](http://www.public.navy.mil/usff/Pages/disaster_preparedness.aspx).
- State of Virginia Emergency Management, <http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia>, which has many resources for planning and preparing emergency kits, developing evacuation plans and addressing specific special needs for children, the elderly and others.
- Virginia Department of Transportation Hurricane Evacuation Guide, [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane\\_defauLT.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane_defauLT.asp), which provides more detailed information for preparing for a hurricane, hurricane evacuation and public shelters in Virginia.

Note: Media desiring more information about this event should contact the USFF Public Affairs Office at 757-836-4421.

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